

Saint Louis Audubon BULLETIN

VOL. 18, No. 1

MARCH, 1949

COMING EVENTS

March 26, Saturday, a field trip to the Gray Summit, Mo. Arboretum . . . spring wildflowers and woods birds. Meet at the gate house, 9 a.m. Chairman: Louis Brenner. Co-chairman: Arthur Christ, phone Sterling 7568. Bring along picnic lunch.

April 10, Sunday, outing at Possum Trot Farm #1, Shuessler Road, Sappington. President Bill Kelley and Mrs. Kelley invite Audubon members and friends to an outdoor "get-together". Good birding, too! Bring along a picnic supper, if you like. Time: 3:00 p.m.

April 16, Tuesday, John James Audubon's birthday - we shall fittingly celebrate with the presentation of the annual Audubon Awards and also with an Audubon Screen Tour: Sounds of the Sageland, by Alice and Harold Allen of Los Angeles, "a new and different nature program."

April 23 and 30, Saturday bird walks for beginners, at Shaw's Garden. Meet at main gate, 8 a.m.

April 24, May 1, 8, 15, Forest Park Bird Walks. Sunday mornings at 7:30. Jefferson Memorial. Open to the public!

May 1, Spring Census. All-day count of bird species in 50 mile radius. Chairman: Jack Battenberg phone Mu. 6337.

May 10, annual meeting, Educ'l. Bldg. auditorium, Third Baptist Church, 7:45 p.m., followed by color motion picture program by Alexander Sprunt Jr., "From Coast to Crest", featuring wildlife from the Gulf Coast to the Rockies.

LOYALTY NIGHT

Feature of Loyalty Night, Friday March 18, will be "In the Hills of Gold" by Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill Jr., of Northfield, Minnesota. This film program is described as an action-packed story of the Black Hills. Star performers are wild birds and animals of this unique and historic area - an island of life in the midst of semi-arid wasteland - a "treasure" house in many senses of the word. A colorful motion picture story of a colorful region.

The special educational projects sponsored through the annual Loyalty Night contributions have come to be of ever-growing significance; and it is hoped that members will make it possible to extend them. Such things as the free Screen Tour programs for school children, nature camp scholarships, scholarship member-

ships, conservation awards, etc. do a tremendous amount of good, not only through spreading conservation education and stimulating interest in nature, but also in character building, which is so important. If you have not already mailed in your Loyalty Contribution, you may still do so.

Be sure to attend the Loyalty Night Screen Tour program, March 18, Third Baptist Church, 8:15 p.m. If you'd like to bring a friend, send a postcard for a special pass.



Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr.



BIRD HOUSE BUILDING PROJECT

During February and early March a large scale bird house building project, inaugurated by the St. Louis Audubon Society, has been under way, through the cooperation of the Boy Scout troops of this area.

Co-chairmen of the committee are: G. Alex Hope, and Wm. Neal Kelley. Committee members are: Rex Conyers, Gordon Hanson, Earl H. Hath, George Graff. In preparation for this undertaking, these men represented the Audubon Society, speaking before groups of Scout leaders, on purposes and methods. Each troop received letter of instructions, page of dimensions, and printed booklet by Roger Tory Peterson. Funds for the bulk of these materials were provided as a gift from an Audubon member.

The Boy Scouts individually signed pledge cards to build the bird houses on a "good turn" basis, in view of the benefits derived from birds in the way of checking insect, rodent, and weed seed populations. It is further hoped, of course, that this project will serve to stimulate greater interest in birds and nature among these future citizens.

AUDUBON CONVENTION IN DETROIT

Although it is quite a while until Oct. 15-18, you may want to set aside these dates now, for the National Audubon Convention, to be held in Detroit. This will be its first time away from New York City; and all members are invited. Program of events will be announced later. "Big doin's" are being planned, we hear.

MR. & MRS. HUNGRY BIRD, R.F.D.

A personal letter to our organization from the publisher of Collier's magazine called attention to the unusually interesting article by Helen Cruickshank in the Jan. 22 issue, on the subject of providing food for wild birds during bad winter weather. Through the cooperation of the U.S. Post Office Dept. anyone can send one or two pound packages to "Mr. & Mrs. Hungry Bird, R.F.D.1", sending it to any town having R.F.D. service. The rural carrier will distribute the food along his route.

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1207 N. 7th Street —Central 0631

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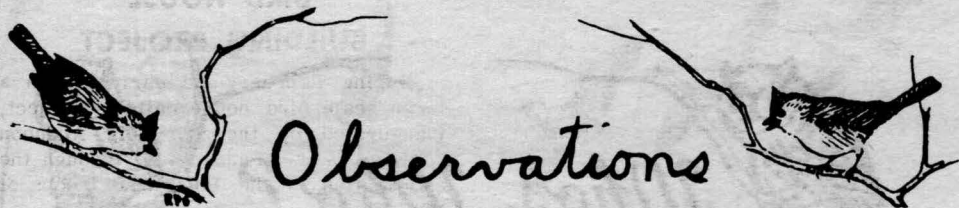
SERVICE TO MEMBERS

Within the past few months our Supply Committee has extended its activities to include not only such items as check lists, as before, but also; bird and nature books, field glasses, Bausch & Lomb binoculars, note cards and post cards, bird song records, bird art, etc. For the present orders for any of these items may be mailed to S.B. Heckler, Exec. Sec., 1207 No. 7th St., St. Louis 6, Mo.

A set of colored bird slides, bird song records, and automatic record player are available for free loan by the St. Louis Audubon Society to any group or member who wishes to make use of them for educational purposes.. Just send in a written request.

S.P. JONES TIMETABLE OF ST. LOUIS BIRDS

Anyone not already having a Jones Check list, with its listings of arrival and departure dates and of relative status of birds in this region will find it most useful. They may be obtained by sending 25¢ to supply chairman Anne Bayha, 5742 Page Blvd.



BIRD OF 1948 - GYRFALCON. It was indeed appropriate that during the white Christmas a white Gyrfalcon should appear, and be seen by hawk specialist Brother Hubert Lewis, of Glencoe. This bird, usually found far to the north and west of this region, receives our vote for Bird of the Year!

TOP TEN OF 1948. Bird students and hobbyists who delight in the rare and unusual found 1948 a year full of pleasant surprises. Besides the Gyrfalcon, already noted, we would include the following among the "best ten": Arctic Towhee, Red-shafted Flicker, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Evening Grosbeak, Sprague's Pipit, Eared Grebe, Bachman's Sparrow, Saw-whet Owl, White-winged Scoter.

As always there is no fixed rule for selection of the most outstanding bird visitors, and opinions vary. Some of the other "red-letter" birds of '48 were: Ruddy Turnstone, Goshawk, Sanderling, Florida Gallinule, Western Meadowlark, White-rumped Sandpiper, Harris's Sparrow, Western Grebe.

Among the fortunate Audubonites to have observed one or more of these species were: Earl Comfort, Kurt Wesseling Jr., Jack Van Benthuyssen, Bro. Hubert Lewis, Hattie Ettinger, Frances Pickel, Alberta Bolinger, Marshall Magner, Ellen Cone, Helen Henke, Ethel Wolfe, Beulah Bedell, Vivian Henry, Susan Grummann, Lud Hill, Bill Bremser, Jim Ziervogel, Eugene Wilhelm, Mr. & Mrs. O. C. K. Hutchinson, Charles Laun.

CHRISTMAS CENSUS '48. Although the weather made an "all out" effort to keep the bird counters "all in" during the census period, many of those who did participate were rewarded with some interesting finds. Bill Kelley and his group found a White Pelican at St. Charles. The group who recorded the area near Alton found an unusual combination - Great Blue Herons and Snow Buntings, within a few miles of each other. And Earl Comfort's fine list of 51 included the Western Grebe, besides 15 species of waterfowl.

FINE START FOR '49. During January three bird species which most of us have not had the good fortune to observe were recorded for this area: Common Redpolls, by Bro. Hubert Lewis, at Glencoe. Don't let that name fool you. Redpolls are UNcommon, here. White-winged Crossbills, by Mrs. William Scarlett, at the Scarlett residence in Webster Groves. These are so unusual that they are not even listed in the Jones Check List. Pink-sided Junco, by Bill & Mary Kelley, at Possum Trot #1.

MYRTLE WARBLERS. There have been so many more reports of these during this winter that we can only assume that more Myrtle Warblers are wintering in this area than formerly. Among the many reports is one from Louis Brenner, who has been seeing good numbers of them at the Gray Summit Arboretum.

SNOWY EGRETS were notable for their presence in good numbers in '48. These beautiful "birds with the golden slippers", uncommon not so long ago, have made a fine comeback.

INVITE YOUR FRIENDS to join the Audubon Society! Active and Screen Tour memberships taken out at this time carry through until September, 1950. Regular and Sustaining memberships, which are joint with the National Audubon Society, extend to a year from date. Send in names and addresses of friends you would like to recommend for membership.



Who's Who?



BIRDERS OF 1948: It seems our "Webster Groves group" have done it again! Jack Van Benthuyzen topped all previous records with his final list of 250 species. Earl Comfort was second, with 246. Eugene Wilhelm was third, with 245. Kurt Wesseling Jr., Billy Bremser, Alberta Bolinger, Jim Ziervogel had counts close to these figures. Composite list for the St. Louis area was 262.

Such intensive bird observations are great sport; and a real challenge to friendly competition and careful study. Roger Tory Peterson, in his recent book "Birds Over America" has a chapter called "The Lure of the List", in which he tells what great fun and value can come from this sort of birding.

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So far this season Audubon Screen Tours have brought us: Allan Cruickshank — Trails for the Millions; Laurel Reynolds — With Feathers Flying; George Orians — By Erie's Changing Shores; Tom & Arlene Hadley — Happy Valley; Alfred M. Bailey — Cajun Country. These adventurous and colorful programs by some of the country's leading naturalists have been well enjoyed. Even with some imperfect weather, attendance has been very good.

Local Programs have given opportunity for friendly informal "get-togethers". Featured at Mrs. Drury's cordial open-house at the Public Library was the Cruickshank Photography Exhibit. Charles Schwartz' Hawaiian slides and the Mauntels' chalk-talk were extremely well received. Father Link's wildlife talk at Stix Baer & Fuller, to which the public was invited, was a standing-room-only performance. Dick Grossenheider's paintings received widespread attention, not only through the exhibit itself but also from the full page of color reproductions in the Sunday Globe-Democrat.

The February and March meetings were preparation for spring... Beulah Bedell's talk on the Warblers was inter-

esting and informative. Even Father Link said he learned from it! As this Bulletin goes to press we are looking forward to Mr. & Mrs. George Moore's slide-talk for beginners, on Birds of Missouri.

Mildred Reese is Membership Chairman this year; and Erna Nauert is Door Chairman. To these chairmen and their committee members the club is indeed grateful for the continued smooth operation of all our meetings.

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The Garden of Appreciation Club, of which Mrs. G. W. Pennewell is President, undertook an interesting project this year by presenting two revolving bird feeders to the Christian Orphan's Home on No. Euclid and to the Methodist Orphan's Home on Waterman. This is such a fine idea that we hope it will spread!

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We plan to have a booth at the St. Louis Flower Show again this year, since it was so successful both last year and the year before, under the co-chairmanship of Mrs. Geo. Klinkerfuss, Mrs. Percy Coleman, John C. McGuire.

* * *

The Student Audubon Screen Tours are proving to be one of our finest activities again this season. The rapt attention and eager response of the 1000 to 1500 school-children who attend each program make it a gratifying experience. The schedule this year includes: Allan Cruickshank; Laurel Reynolds, Howard Cleaves, Olin Sewall Pettingill Jr., Alice and Harold Allen. Four are held at Southwest High Auditorium, and one at Vashon. Through the cooperation of the Board of Education elementary school children are excused early, with their teachers, to attend. These programs are made possible through the generosity of Audubon Loyalty contributions of last year. Management of them is under the capable direction of Elizabeth Golterman, Director of the Division of Audio-Visual Education.